



Lake Manitoba
Stewardship Board

Annual Report
2007-08



Delta Marsh Field Station

Box 38, R.R #2
Portage la Prairie, Manitoba
R1N 3A2
(204) 857-8637
delta_marshall@umanitoba.ca

9 May 2008

The Honourable Christine Melnick
Minister, Manitoba Water Stewardship
314 Legislative Building
450 Broadway
Winnipeg, Manitoba
R3C 0V8

Dear Minister Melnick,

I am pleased to submit a report describing the work of the Lake Manitoba Stewardship Board during its first year of operations, from February 2007 to April 2008 inclusive.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Gordon Goldsborough".

Dr. L. Gordon Goldsborough
Chair, Lake Manitoba Stewardship Board

Lake Manitoba Stewardship Board

Annual Report 2007-08

Formation of the Lake Manitoba Stewardship Board was announced by the Minister of Water Stewardship, the Honourable Christine Melnick, on 27 February 2007 at the Delta Marsh Field Station (University of Manitoba). Formation of the Board had been recommended by the Lake Manitoba Regulation Review Advisory Committee (LMRRAC), which worked between 2001 and 2003. The Board's initial members, each of whom was appointed to a three-year term ending February 2010, were as follows:

Gordon Goldsborough	Chair, University professor & LMRRAC member	Winnipeg
Bill Finney	Vice-Chair, farmer, commercial fisher & LMRRAC member	Eddystone
Allan Gaudry	Commercial fisher	St. Laurent
Dan Coyle	Cottage owner	Winnipeg
Tracy Filion	Farmer & commercial fisher	Grahamdale
Harold Fleming	Farmer & commercial fisher	Meadow Portage
Randy Helgason	Commercial fisher	Ashern
David Milani	Fisheries consultant	Boggy Creek
Gary Morlock	Sport hunter and fisher	Winnipeg
Linda Schroedter	Cattle producer	Moosehorn
Donald Smith	Farmer & commercial fisher	Langruth
Norman Traverse	First Nations & commercial fisher	Lake St. Martin
Rae Trimble-Olson	Farmer & cottage user	Portage la Prairie

The Board elected Bill Finney as Vice-Chair. Bob Harrison was appointed to represent Manitoba Water Stewardship and Laura Manson provided secretarial support. An offer from the Chair to host the Board at the Delta Marsh Field Station for purposes of public communication was accepted, so the mailing address and telephone numbers are as follows:

Box 38, R.R. #2

Portage la Prairie, Manitoba R1N 3A2

Telephone: (204) 857-8637 or Canada toll-free (866) 770-5372

Fax: (204) 857-4683 or Canada toll-free (866) 770-5371

A Mission Statement was approved by the Board as follows:

"To maintain and enhance the long term health of the Lake Manitoba watershed along with Lake St. Martin, Pineimuta Lake, Fairford River, and Dauphin River to Lake Winnipeg."

The Board accepted its Terms of Reference as follows, modified from those recommended in the LMRRAC Final Report. Term of Reference 5 was further revised when it was determined that the Portage Diversion Advisory Committee is inactive.

- 1. To establish and maintain an ongoing dialogue with local interests, municipalities and the province regarding the management of Lake Manitoba, Lake Pineimuta, Lake St. Martin, and the Fairford and Dauphin Rivers, to solicit, as required, public input related to these concerns, and to communicate with the public on a regular basis.**
- 2. To communicate with the Minister on an ongoing basis with regard to water levels on Lake Manitoba, Lake Pineimuta, and Lake St. Martin, including the operation and maintenance of the Fairford River Water Control Structure and the associated fish ladder, and to recommend appropriate seasonal flows to be maintained in the Fairford and Dauphin Rivers insofar as this is reasonably possible.**
- 3. To advocate long-term monitoring and research on water levels and the health of Lake Manitoba, Lake Pineimuta, and Lake St. Martin, including coastal marshlands along these water bodies, to be carried out by the appropriate agencies and report on the results to the Minister. This should include all aspects of water quality, fisheries, wildlife, agriculture, recreation, shoreline erosion, marshland rejuvenation, impacts on First Nations and other communities, and such other matters as deemed advisable by the Committee or by the Minister.**
- 4. To investigate, and if considered advisable, recommend remedial projects to enhance all aspects of the general health of the lakes, associated marshlands and associated resources and resource uses, as outlined above. In this regard, the Committee shall actively encourage jointly funded private sector / government projects.**
- 5. To provide advice to Manitoba Water Stewardship on the operation of the Portage Diversion to ensure that Lake Manitoba interests are taken into consideration.**

6. Review fishery management plans according to the following criteria in order of importance: a) biological sustainability, b) economic viability, and c) social fairness and community benefits. In doing so a more reasoned and fair approach can be developed (i.e. with supporting data / information and fair public values incorporated).

The Board decided to meet every two months, or more frequently as required, and, to enable communication with groups in the lake watershed, to hold meetings in communities around the lake. Between February 2007 and April 2008, the Board met as follows:

24 September 2007	Lake Manitoba Narrows
19 November 2007	Delta Marsh Field Station
17 December 2007	Winnipeg
21 January 2008	Ashern
17 March 2008	Langruth
17 April 2008	Lake St. Martin

At all meetings, over 75% of Board members were in attendance. Board members are gradually familiarizing themselves with the water issues surrounding Lake Manitoba with a view toward making recommendations to the government as it develops sound management policies on lake water quantity and quality. A majority of Board members are on a learning curve. The Board made the following decisions:

- **Conflict of Interest** Board members must declare all possible conflicts of interest at the beginning of a meeting where such conflicts may arise but they should remain in the meeting to serve as a resource to answer questions regarding the issue. Those members will not participate in the decision making process on the issue.
- **Public Communication** Where possible, the Board will use its web site (www.lakemanitoba.org and www.lakemanitoba.ca) as the primary means of communication with the public. After a tender process, the web development firm Intrinsix (which developed a web site for the Lake Winnipeg Stewardship Board) was selected to develop one for the Board. The web site should have the capability for dialogue between members of the public (a web "forum") as well as providing information. Originally anticipated to be completed by January 2008, the web site has been unexpectedly delayed by the contractor. The Board developed a contact list of media people in communities around the lake to whom information about Board activities can be directed. The

Board will investigate developing a program of "microgrants" to schools in the Lake Manitoba watershed to encourage students to think about the lake, its ecosystem and environmental threats.

- **Fairford Control Structure** The Board was asked in September 2007 to consider a proposal by Manitoba Water Stewardship to reduce water flow at the Fairford Control Structure by 1,000 cfs to reduce the probability of downstream flooding due to frazil ice accumulation. The proposal was supported by the Board. Subsequently, flow was increased by 1,000 cfs on 4 February 2008 as the risk of frazil ice formation no longer existed. This change restored the outflow and was endorsed by the Board at its meeting on 21 January 2008. The Board encouraged Manitoba Water Stewardship to contact the impacted individuals and communities.
- **Data Collection** The Board is considering the employment of an independent contractor to extract population and economic data relating to the Lake Manitoba watershed from the 2006 federal census, as a basis for understanding activities in the area. A Request For Proposal is being developed.
- **Science Summit** The Board needs good, reliable data so our recommendations to the government are defensible and founded in knowledge, not conjecture. The Board will host a workshop in Spring 2008, either in Winnipeg or at the Delta Marsh Field Station, with the following objectives: 1) review the status of existing information on aspects of the Lake Manitoba watershed relating to the LMSB Terms of Reference; 2) identify important data gaps in existing knowledge; and 3) develop a list of ranked priorities for future research activities to provide guidance to the Manitoba Water Stewardship Fund, other funding sources, and research agencies.

The following guests attended meetings of the Board:

- **Dwight Williamson**, Director of Water Science and Management Branch of Manitoba Water Stewardship, attended the meetings on 24 September 2007 and 17 December 2007 to address questions from the Board on its Terms of Reference and other operational details.
- **Elaine Shipley**, Water Quality Management Section of Manitoba Water Stewardship, attended the meeting on 19 November 2007 to give a presentation on her extensive study of Lake Manitoba water quality done in 2005 and 2006.

- **David Farlinger**, Chair of the former Lake Manitoba Regulation Review Advisory Committee, attended the meeting on 17 December 2007 to give a presentation on final recommendations made by the LMRRAC and to answer questions from the Board.
- **Wanda McFadyen**, Executive Director of Farm Stewardship Association of Manitoba, attended the meeting on 21 January 2008 to give a presentation on the Environmental Farm Plan Program.
- **Bill Barlow and Sharon Gurney**, Chair and Technical Secretary, respectively, of the Lake Winnipeg Stewardship Board attended the meeting on 17 March 2008 to give a presentation on the LWSB Work Plan and to answer questions from the Board. It is anticipated that the two Stewardship Boards will work together closely in areas of mutual interest. The 17 March meeting was also attended by Philip Thordarson, Reeve of the Rural Municipality of Lakeview.
- **Harry Harris**, Manager of the Alonsa Conservation District, attended the meeting on 17 March 2008 to give a presentation on the activities of the Alonsa Conservation District.
- **The Fairford Fishway Working Group** and several commercial fishers, North-South Consultants, along with Joel Hunt and Derek Kroeker of the Manitoba Fisheries Branch, met with the Board at Lake St. Martin on 17 April 2008. Hunt gave a presentation of the history and issues surrounding the Fishway. North-South Consultants presented their findings from an October 2007 study to consider what, if any, impairment the Fishway represents on movement of fish between the Fairford River and Lake Manitoba. Preliminary results indicate that debris accumulates in the Fishway but fish passage does occur under some flow conditions. Further investigation is warranted to satisfy the concerns that fishers presently have with the structure.

The Chair gave informational presentations on the Board, its Terms of Reference and initial activities, to the following groups:

- **The Manitoba Water Council** at its meeting in La Broquerie, Manitoba on 23 November 2007.
- **The IJC International Red River Board** at its meeting in Winnipeg on 24 January 2008.
- **The Manitoba Conservation Districts Association**, at a workshop in Portage la Prairie, Manitoba on 5 March 2008. The workshop was convened by the Lake Winnipeg Stewardship Board to find ways of fostering better

communication between the Districts and two Stewardship Boards. A draft report on the workshop is in preparation by the LWSB Technical Secretary.

The Board provided a letter of support for an *ad hoc* group known as the Lake Manitoba Lost Net Working Group, which proposes to retrieve commercial fishing nets lost in a late 2002 fall storm, which are now littered along the southeast shores of the lake.

Board Activities 2007-08



Water Stewardship Minister Melnick announced the establishment of the Lake Manitoba Stewardship Board in February 2007. L-R: Tom Nevakshonoff (MLA, Interlake), Board Chair Gordon Goldsborough, Christine Melnick, and David Faurschou (MLA, Portage la Prairie).



The Lake Manitoba Stewardship Board at its meeting in Winnipeg, December 2007, at which a presentation by LMRRAC Chair David Farlinger was heard.



The Board viewed the Fairford Control Structure following its meeting at Lake St. Martin in April 2008.



The Board heard presentations on the Fairford Fishway from the Manitoba Fisheries Branch and North-South Consultants and met with local fishers at its meeting at Lake St. Martin.

Cover photo of Lake Manitoba sunset courtesy T. L. Bortoluzzi & Delta Marsh Field Station.
All other photos by G. Goldsborough & Delta Marsh Field Station.